PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT
FOR NEW AND BEGINNING TEACHERS

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The Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute

L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs

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Professional Development Toolkit for New and Beginning Teachers

The PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT FOR NEW AND BEGINNING TEACHERS is a research-based video streamed program with accompanying resource documents. The program is an outgrowth of a previous Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute (CEPI) online mentoring study at Virginia Commonwealth University. The findings of the online mentoring study revealed twelve topics new and beginning teachers felt additional university training would have led them to more effective use of best practices in the classroom. In this program, each of the twelve topics is presented in two to six stand alone video segments. The total number of segments is forty five. Suggested uses, in addition to personal viewing by K-12 teachers for self improvement, include professional development, mentor and mentee, university prospective teacher, and small or large group training.

The facilitators are university faculty and practitioners with field experience. Each is currently involved in teacher training or serves as a staff development administrator. All are currently engaged in educational research, teaching and/or educational policy development.

The teachers in the video programs are classroom teachers. Some of them were participants in the 2006 Online Mentoring Study in which the topics for this project were identified. They represent all disciplines in K-12 grades.

Resource documents for the programs are provided as PDF files to facilitate the use of the 45 video segments. The first set of documents is composed of: (1) a description of the project, (2) an introduction to program facilitators, including a definition of each topic, and a list of the video segments, and (3) a research formative study summary that helped to guide the project's development. The second set of documents is composed of: (1) a description of the project, (2) a full text transcript for each video segment, (3) a set of problems and solutions related to each video segment in the form of a work-study guide, and (4) an annotated bibliographic summary of references and Internet links for each transcript. Many of the organizations and agencies referenced in the transcripts are actively involved in the development of video and professional development presentations that support policy and advocacy.

Every reasonable effort is made to present current and accurate information. Internet content, however, does appear, disappear and change over time. CEPI, as a university-based educational policy research institute endorses no specific position of any listed group.

ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION

SEGMENT #2: ACTIVE EVALUATION PARTICIPATION

🗀 VIDEO SEGMENT TRANSCRIPT

Administration and Supervision: A perspective on the role of a teacher, principal, supervisor, and the state in a school assessment program.

Facilitator: Dr. Christopher Corallo, Director of Staff Development
Henrico County Public Schools

AUDIO	VIDEO
The teacher evaluation and growth process is gaining attention as school leaders consider the impact of developing teachers as reflective practitioners. With this approach, the administrator facilitates the development of teachers' deep, reflective analysis of their own teaching. One aspect of this process that makes it different from other approaches to evaluation is the level of involvement and responsibility that the teacher assumes in his or her own professional growth. My name is Christopher Corallo and I represent the Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute at Virginia Commonwealth University. Today I would like to share a brief review of a reflective approach to evaluation and supervision of instruction. In this segment we will specifically address the proactive role teachers take in their own growth and development. In the more traditional evaluation models the evaluator, usually the principal, gathers evidence of teacher job performance on specific job indicators. Evidence is gathered through classroom visits and observing teacher performance on other responsibilities outside of classroom teaching. In the more reflective model, teachers use the standards or job performance measures to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses and work with their evaluator on a plan for improvement of specific standards. The standards needing improvement may also be jointly identified by the teacher and the evaluator. The rest of the year is spent focusing the attention of both the teacher and evaluator on the standards identified for improvement or growth. At the end of the year an evaluation is provided by the evaluator that is based on evidence of performance specific to the identified job performance standards. This new approach puts the teacher in a position to be proactive about his or her own growth. Teachers no longer wait for evaluations to defend practices and make changes in their practice. Instead, teachers are supported as they define areas of growth, establish goals, and implement strategies designed to help reach goals.	DR. CORALLO

Now we will hear from some of our teachers as they describe how they actively participate in their own evaluation and professional development.	
I'm Dwight Van Rossum and this is my fourth year teaching first grade. This year, specifically with the new reflective process, I had the opportunity to evaluate both the strengths and weaknesses of my own teaching. Then, I set some goals and objectives for myself based on the areas I felt needed improving. For instance, this year I wanted to focus on delivering more differentiated reading instructions to my students. I wanted to extend this to math lessons as well. Those became my focus this year. There are some areas that I felt more confident in such as classroom management and behavior management so I did not need to focus on those. However I still tried to grow and develop professionally in those areas by reflecting on what I do and how I can be better. When my principal came to observe me, she was not looking at what she wanted to see in a teacher, but she was looking at how I am progressing in my focus areas. We met afterwards and I answered a series of questions and she provided formative feedback to support my progress. I must admit, knowing she would be looking for progress towards the goals that I set for myself made me work harder. I set the goals, so I had to meet or exceed my own expectations first, then her expectations. We agreed that I did meet my goals, however, I will know for sure at the end of the year when I am a better teacher than I was before this Professional Growth and Evaluation Plan process. I am continuously evaluating myself and reflecting on how to be better. This process allowed me to take the leading role in my own development.	DWIGHT VAN ROSSUM
I'm Gaynell Lyman and I'm a high school science teacher. I appreciate the flexibility the new process gives me to work on skills I need to become a better teacher. My administrator provides a good perspective and asks me questions that really challenge my thinking.

She's not the only person I rely on to help me reach my goals. One time, when my administrator was not available, I invited another teacher that I trust to come to my room and help me collect some data on a problem I just couldn't seem to wrap my brain around. She ended up being a great resource because she had taught many of the same students. Together, we brainstormed strategies and within a week I'd come up with a solution that was working for me.

Initially I was frustrated that my administrator wasn't available to help me. Reflecting back, it was better for me to work with another teacher to solve my problem. Had my administrator come to my class, I might have tried to push the problem off on her or expected her to fix it. Resolving the situation myself gave me confidence to tackle other bigger problems and that has helped me become a better teacher. | GAYNELL LYMAN |
| Dwight shares with us how his administrator facilitated his thinking in order to help him achieve his individual professional goals. This process was intrinsically motivating for Dwight and inspired him to push himself harder in pursuit of excellence. Gaynell makes a good point that the evaluation and professional development process does not require intervention on the part of the administration. | DR. CORALLO |

Teachers who are actively involved in their own evaluation may take a more proactive approach to their own growth and development.

As a new teacher it is important that you not fear classroom observations as part of the evaluation process. Embrace it as a way to get feedback on your teaching so that you can grow and improve. Be proactive- ask to be observed- ask for feedback on your teaching. Be specific about what you want to improve and what feedback is most helpful.   What are you doing right now to be an active participant in your evaluation and professional growth?

📁 PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Ask yourself: What parts of your school day are most productive? Why? What parts of your day are least productive? How could you make the less beneficial times better for students and yourself?

Suggested use for this module:

1. Analyze:

Please select one of the scenarios below and problem-solve a list of possible solutions. Record your ideas in the space provided. Discuss these ideas with your other educators (mentor, colleagues, or other beginning teachers).

2. View:

Watch the corresponding video on this topic. How does this information change your ideas?

3. Compare:

Revisit the scenario selected. Next, review the section entitled, "Possible Solutions" comparing the ideas listed with your own list.

4. Reflect:

How will you apply this new information to your current or future classroom? What goal will you set to help you begin to change your practices? What support is needed to help you accomplish this goal?

5. Apply:

List the first step towards change below. Create a timeline for success and place deadlines in your personal planner as a reminder. How will you know when you have met your goals?

Scenarios 1 & 2: Administration and Supervision

Scenario 1:

Julie just moved to a new school and is struggling to manage childcare for her two-small children along with all of the responsibilities of her middle school teaching job. She has been assigned to teach 8th grade math classes. Her colleagues meet on Tuesday nights to plan together. The meeting lasts until late into the evening. It seems that she is always playing catch-up trying to find the materials needed for her lessons. She often feels lost and confused by all of her responsibilities but fears telling her teammates how she really feels because she doesn't want to seem unprepared. The marathon meetings are another concern for her. Julie doesn't want to offend her new teammates, but is worried about the time away from her little ones and the cost of unexpected daycare fees.

Scenario 2:
Damon can't wait for Thanksgiving Break to have a few days to unwind from his daunting teaching load. He is teaching 5th grade at an elementary school in the Tidewater area. As the school day is about to begin, Damon bumps into a parent volunteer who is arriving to help in his classroom. He was just on his way to cover morning hallway duty. He searches through the piles of papers on his desk to find a task for the volunteer to complete with no luck. He must leave for his duty right away. What should he do?

Circle the scenario that you selected below:

Scenario 1   **Scenario 2**

Record a list of your own possible reactions/ solutions here:

Summary & Goal Setting:

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Organization and time-savers will help you better manage administrative tasks, thus leading to more time to develop your instructional activities. The suggestions listed below are intended to be very practical solutions for managing everyday tasks. Talk with your mentor or colleagues to share other time-saving suggestions.

Management of Materials

Clipboards
Clipboards seem like an unusual solution for busy teachers. However, they easily stack into a small space and keep items secure and handy. Another benefit is that they are highly mobile. Different color clipboards, folders, or notebooks will help you to quickly identify the materials needed during teaching. Consider keeping the following items on clipboards at your desk:

1. current lesson plans

2. roster of student names on a checklist

3. future planning sheet

Some teachers select a consistent color for each class section or subject area. For example, third-period materials are kept in red pocket folders or notebooks. This helps to keep graded work separated and provides an easy visual when taking items home to work on in the evenings.

Photocopy Box

Create a box which is kept in an easy to get to location near your small group table or desk. Use the photocopy box when you are planning or when you need to copy or document student work. Any time that you come across something beneficial to copy, simply place it in this box. This way, your papers to be copied will not become buried on your desk and you are planning ahead for the materials you will need for conferences or future instruction.

Technology

Create a computer file marked 'masters' and keep this on the desktop of your computer. Anytime you create a newsletter, letter home, form, or committee report, place it in a folder in this location. Teachers often reinvent materials in the future. In the scenarios above, both teachers feel overwhelmed by all of their responsibilities as a beginning teacher. Templates from previous newsletters or volunteer visits could really assist these teachers while generating ideas for future activities.

Home Materials

Create a location by the classroom door where anything that needs to be sent home can be stored. As reminders are placed in your mailbox, drop them into this box to be sent home at the end of the day. Prior to dismissal, always check this space for any items to be distributed to go home. You may also want to place a small dry erase board (with a marker attached) in this box. This dry erase board is helpful for bus changes, early dismissal notes, and absentee work reminders. Once the day is over, the board can be quickly erased for the next school day.

Managing Responsibilities

Teacher Bulletin Board

Keep a medium-sized bulletin board next to your desk with forms you use often placed on it. These are forms that are for the teacher's use only. This board will hold reminders, schedules, notices, school calendars, and other crucial school information.

Student Information

Create index cards for each class that you teach. Every student should have a card which contains student database information such as address, contact phone numbers, family members, allergy information, birthday, and/or email contact information. Use the front of the card when you need to make a call home or send a good-news gram home to quickly gather the necessary numbers. Use the back of the card for listing critical student information such as notes sent-home, absences, tardiness, or parent calls. Some experienced teachers keep a copy of emergency cards as they are collected at the start of the year. Be certain to keep this information secure and confidential in a locked location. Shred or discard following the appropriate policies once each school year is complete.

Become Portable

You've got wheels! For materials which need to be taken home each evening, purchase a crate or small rolling suitcase on wheels. This rolling storage space can hold your laptop, student papers, grade book and/or planning materials. Hauling materials this way helps to keep you organized and facilitates a central location

to place items that you will need for the next day. Just remember to unpack unnecessary materials so that you do not create an unmanageable pile of clutter!

Meetings
Suggest to your teammates that you create a quick agenda at the start of each meeting which contains the key items that you must accomplish that day. Designate one member of the group to be the timekeeper and make agree that each meeting will end on-time. Also, be realistic. If you never finish on-time and always ended staying an extra hour, schedule your meeting for a longer time-period or divide the business and meet twice to accomplish your goals.

Agenda/ Planner
No matter your personal preference (calendar or day planner), palm pilot, or laptop, it is essential to keep an up-to-date calendar of all of your responsibilities. Carry it with you to all events and meetings. Most people find that keeping two different versions of their calendar is unrealistic (home and school).   Keeping all of your appointments and responsibilities in one location is helpful. Some educators use a portable three column system to track the tasks that they are working on (item to begin, items in process, completed items-file) and keep them organized visually. Small sticky notes inside the cover of your planner or a composition book will work well for this.

🗁 ANNOTATED RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY

❖ Overall teachers spend a significant amount of time each week outside of the normal school day both working with students and working on school-related activities without students present. These additional hours argue that defining a teacher's performance exclusively in terms of classroom instruction may be ignoring other important responsibilities that teachers are often willing to take on, such as tutoring and facilitating extracurricular activities.

Burian-Fitzgrald, Marisa & Harris, Debbi. (2004). *Giving 110%: Portrait of a Michigan teacher's work week.* Retrieved September 24, 2007, from
http://www.epc.msu.edu/publications/REPORT/report22.pdf

❖ Research on learning to teach has implications for the design of induction and mentoring programs: Giving beginning teachers difficult teaching assignments (multiple preparations, subjects out of their field, or demanding extracurricular assignments) is not only stressful for them but impedes the process of learning to teach.

Huling-Austin, Leslie. (1992). *Research on learning to teach: implications for teacher induction and mentoring programs.* Journal of Teacher Education, 43(3), p. 173-8.